



H.B. 5433, An Act Establishing a Council on Mental and Behavioral Health Program Oversight

March 14, 2022

Senator Catherine A. Osten
Representative Toni E. Walker
Appropriations Committee Members
Legislative Office Building, Room 2700
Hartford, CT 06106

Dear Senator Osten, Representative Walker and members of the Appropriations Committee:

The Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents (CAPSS), which represents the Superintendents of Connecticut's public schools and other executive district leaders, is pleased to offer testimony on **H.B. 5433, An Act Establishing a Council on Mental and Behavioral Health Program Oversight**, whose purpose is to establish a council on mental and behavioral health program oversight.

This bill would establish a council to advise the Commissioner of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) on the planning and delivery system for mental and behavioral health programs and services. The council will study and recommend whether the state has enough high-quality, linguistically and culturally competent providers of mental and behavioral health services for both adults and children, critical issues for CAPSS, and the state's parents, students, and educators.

As part of the council, the bill also establishes a standing subcommittee upon which its Executive Director or her designee will represent CAPSS. By July 1, 2023, the subcommittee must make recommendations to the council regarding treatment and services available for children and adults with substance use disorders. The report has to include, at minimum, metrics to evaluate the quality of these treatments and services, legal changes needed to make service delivery more effective, and any other changes necessary to reduce service gaps.

CAPSS supports this bill and welcomes the opportunity to participate in this critical subcommittee; however, it might be prudent to extend the deadline for the subcommittee to complete its comprehensive review of this critically important and complicated subject.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "James M. Reheis". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "James" and middle initial "M." clearly visible, followed by the last name "Reheis".

Executive Director
Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents